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Top Secret
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25X1

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25X1

2 November 1967

25X1

Central Intelligence Bulletin

CONTENTS

25X1

25X1

USSR: Second ABM radar has operational capability.
(Page 4)

Panama: Four parties may bolt Robles coalition.
(Page 5)

Congo (Kinshasa): Congolese claim clash with mercenaries on Angola border. (Page 6)

USSR: Security tightened (Page 7)

Afghanistan: New prime minister (Page 7)

Egypt: Attitude hardens (Page 8)

Ecuador: Continued student demonstrations (Page 8)

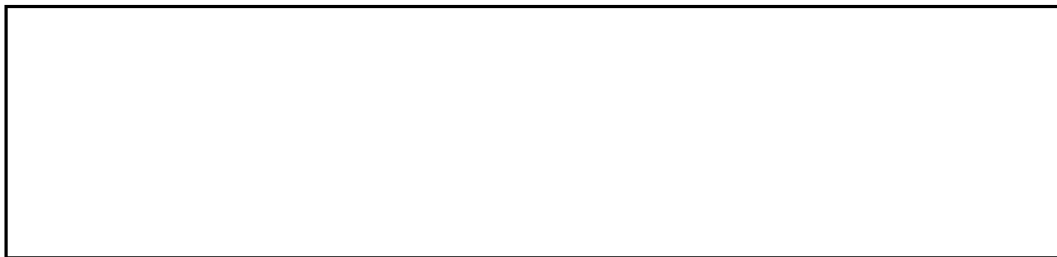
25X1

Next 4 Page(s) In Document Exempt

25X1

USSR: Another segment of the Soviet ABM system probably has achieved operational capability.

25X1



The Skrunda and Olenegorsk radars cover the northern attack corridors to European USSR and can track multiple targets for the Soviet ABM system. Some of the defensive missile launchers at Moscow will be finished next year, and the system is expected to be fully operational in 1971. Even then, its capability to defend against a sophisticated ballistic missile attack will be limited.

25X1

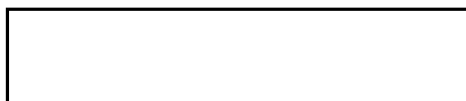
25X1



2 Nov 67

4

25X1



Panama: Four of the eight parties in the government coalition seem likely to break away and form an electoral alliance with opposition leader Arnulfo Arias.

The four parties oppose President Robles' choice of Finance Minister David Samudio as head of the government ticket in the presidential election in May 1968.

25X1

The hopes of the rebel parties that Minister of the Presidency Ramirez might emerge as a compromise candidate have been dashed by his losses to Samudio in the election of delegates to the Liberal Party's nominating convention. The prospect of an Arias victory, however, could yet force Robles to make a last-ditch attempt to salvage his ramshackle coalition by settling on another candidate.

The intense political maneuvering has forced the canal treaty issue into the background. Unless Robles can patch up his coalition, his administration will be so weakened that it will be unlikely to expend any major effort on the treaties during its final months in office.

25X1

2 Nov 67

5

25X1

*Congo (Kinshasa): Congolese Army units and "mercenaries" engaged in battle last night at Kisenge on the Angolan-Katangan border, [REDACTED]

25X1

25X1
25X1

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] This possibly could be a first step of a mercenary "invasion" from Angola which has been rumored for some time. [REDACTED]

25X6

There have also been [REDACTED] encounters between Angolan nationalists and Portuguese authorities, during which the Portuguese have chased the rebels over the Congolese border. It is possible that another such clash took place and, given the Congolese' present nervous state of mind, observers assumed that the white men were mercenaries. [REDACTED]

25X1

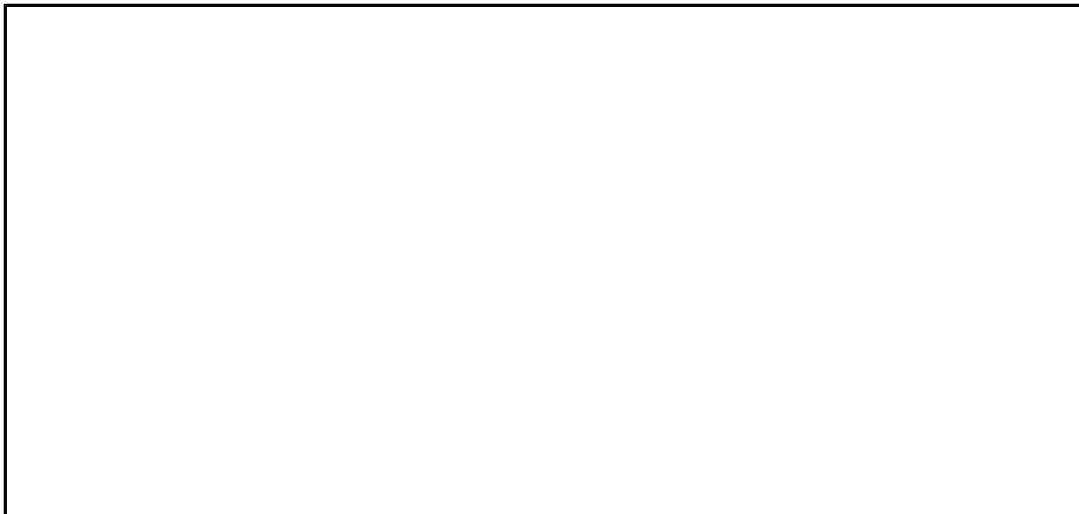
25X1

2 Nov 67

6

25X1

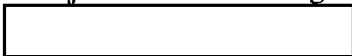
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Afghanistan: The King yesterday appointed Nur Ahmad Etemadi as prime minister to succeed Mohammad Maiwandwal who resigned because of poor health. Etemadi is considered conservative and pro-West and unlikely to initiate any major shifts in Afghan foreign or domestic affairs. 

25X1

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2 Nov 67

7



25X1

Egypt: Egypt's position on acceptable terms for a settlement of the Middle East impasse has hardened recently. An article in the newspaper Al-Ahram [redacted]

25X1

[redacted] said the amended Indian UN draft resolution was as far as Cairo would go toward finding a political solution to the Middle East crisis. This may be in part a tactical position, but the hardened stance probably reflects Cairo's pessimism on the chances of getting an acceptable Middle East resolution. [redacted]

25X1

*Ecuador: Student demonstrators in Guayaquil have intensified their activities in an attempt to force the resignation of Mayor Assad Bucaram. In the third day of violence there were several casualties and the headquarters of Bucaram's political party was set afire. Army tanks have been called into the city to protect the municipal palace. The central government in Quito, seemingly indifferent to Bucaram's fate, has been reluctant to get involved in the conflict but if the situation continues to deteriorate there could be serious repercussions for the national government. [redacted]

25X1

2 Nov 67

8

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